In The Old Gardens / We Need Something *Wholly New*

By Edmund Schilvold

One of my first poems in English

First version written in November 2007

Revisions carried out in 2008 and 2009

We **both** need **some**thing **who**lly **new;**
A **leaf** of **spring**time; **verd**ant, **iri**d**esc**ent **green,**
In **these** old **gard**ens **of** near **ob**so**les**cence,
A **flow**er **of** re**fresh**ing, **pierc**ing **blue**
A**mong** these **with**ered **ros**es **full** of **spleen,**
A **seed**ling, **burst**ing **with** a **new** quin**tess**ence,
A **plant**let **that** might **grow** in**to** a **con**science,
A **fu**ture **will**ow **of** re**fine**ment **true.**

*Do you **know**, **rea**lly **know**, what I **mean**?*

We **need** that **some**thing, **need** it **now**;
'Cause **all** a**round** us, **peo**ple, **ev**en **young**, keep **cling**ing
Un**to** the **trees** of **old**, which **have** de**cayed**
In**to** a **dull**ish **weed**, or **prov**en **foul**
With **ev**ery **moon**, or **that** are **mere**ly **flings**
Of **flim**sy **hu**man **strings**, or **that** are **wick**ed
In **their** en**tire** **hearts**, or **simp**ly **sick**
From **be**ing **cared** for **by** those **wi**ly **crows.**

***So,** you **think** you **really know** who **they** are?*

We **need** that **thing**, the **two** of **us**;
An **em**bry**o** must **be** set **grow**ing **in** this **hand,**
‘Cause we **need** to **grow** our **flow**er **from** a **seed,**
And we **need** to **grow** it **in** the **fer**tile **flush**
Of **our** own **youth,** so **leave** that **hea**vy **sand**
Be**hind**, for **our** new **tree** will **have** no **need**
For **soil**; it **will** but **need** the **gold**en **mead**
Of **in**tell**ect** and **long**ing **joined**, but **hush**,

*You **rea**lly, **rea**lly **must** not **let** them **see** …*

Oh, **how** we **need** to **find** it, **dear**,
‘Cause **all** a**round** us, **peo**ple **trust** the **gard**en**ers;**
Those **cree**py, **would**-be **dic**t**ators** of **veiled** de**ceit**,
Or **turn** to **yel**lowed **docu**ments for **help**ful **leads**,
But **such** d**irec**tions **mere**ly **work** as **hard**en**ers**
On **fruit**ful **soil**, for **in** this **age** of **bold**, new **feet**,
Every **one** of **us** must **do** with**out** de**crees**,
Or **there** will **be** no **grow**ing **sap**ling **to** re**vere**.

*But **rea**lly, **this** is **not** for **ev**ery**one** to **see** …*

Al**as**, this **place** holds **count**less **things**,
But **love**, not **one**, not **one** of **them** will **bring** us **clos**er.
And **though** a **few** of **them** have **charm**ing **looks,**
And **num**er**ous** have **fasc**in**at**ing **tin**ges,
They **can**not **bring** us **near**er **to** our **goal**.
They **all**, how**ev**er, **came** from **mel**low **loam,**
In **ma**ny **ways** the **same** as **we** now **roam.**

Your **lo**ver **knows**, for **one** was **once** his **hinge.**

*But **all** things **change**, and **so**, I **had** to **leave** …*

Oh **my**, these **gard**ens **are** di**verse;**
What **mix** of **strange**ly **beau**ti**ful** and **out**right **ug**ly.
But **all** the **plants** have **heal**ing **prope**r**ties**
Worth **keep**ing, **thus** I **say**: Let's **get** a **purse**
And **take** some **roots** and **plant**lets **from** them **all,**
And **let** our **com**ing **tree** ex**tract** their **stories**
Out **of** their **slugg**ish **sap**, and **thus** ad**vance**
Its **grow**ing **gar**land **to** a **last**ing **glory.**

*For **rea**lly, **who** are **they** to **hin**der **us**?*

Oh **dear**, my **dear**, we **need** it **soon,**
Be**fore** these **dis**mal **pre**cincts **come** a**part** from **rot**
And **bring** forth **beasts**, or **suff**o**cate** our **dreams**
Of **find**ing, **through** a **clim**bing **tree**, that **union**
Of **fruit**ful**ness** that **would** im**prove** our **lot**,
And **let** us **taste** the **jui**cy **fruits** we've **seen**
In **reve**r**ies**, but **ne**ver **had** for **real.**
Oh, **how** that **tree** will **blow** them **all** a**way,**

*When **pierc**ing**ly** blue **flo**wers **have** their **day**…*

Note to the reader: Still not entirely satisfied with its form – I publish it now because it illustrates a part of my intellectual and poetical journey, not because I view it as perfect or completed.

Topics: Religion, disillusionment and spirituality

The gardens are the metaphorical gardens of aged beliefs, some of which are outdated and passé, and some of which might be worth perpetuating.